

Dawn Gross Research Fund at UCSF

I love supporting people in discovering what matters most. For most of my career I have been working toward making it easier for people to talk about what makes their life unique and precious as a way to better align how healthcare teams can provide support. I've found that the more points of entry I can create, the easier it is for people to engage. That's where writing, speaking and podcasting have been so illuminating.

I have also wanted to create something that compels rather than simply lessen the seeming inherent repulsion to this conversation. So, I began thinking about what makes people automatically come

toward something with curiosity. And that's when it occurred to me: when we see something that sparkles we are immediately curious rather than scared! We go toward the glistening sunlight on the ocean waves, the twinkle of stars at night, and the gleaming of sequins and gemstones as they flash in the light. And that's when I began thinking about geodes and the crystals that lay inside. It occurred to me that geodes are a lot like people: The outside never tells you what's on the inside; no two are alike; and, they are astonishingly beautiful! When light is allowed to shine on their cores, it illuminates the treasures within. Hence, the creation of what I call, *Geode Cards*. Given my background in hematology, I chose to begin a project using the *Geode Cards* with nurses in the UCSF Parnassus Infusion Center. The enthusiasm by everyone involved is awe-inspiring! Some recent comments include: "The conversations made my heart swell; It felt good to 'crack' the patients open...they were so happy to share."

Thank you for your curiosity and your support. Every contribution makes more ports of entry possible. If you have questions or want to learn more about these projects, please reach out ❤️

